

Acton woman wants to help Third World breast cancer survivors

BY DOUG HARRISON

The Acton Tanner

Women in Third World countries have no access to external breast prostheses.

Acton's Lynda Bowen, following the example set by Canadian Cancer Survivors Helping Others (CCSHO), wants to provide used prostheses to them.

She says after a woman has a mastectomy, a prostheses, which fits in a bra to look and feel like the missing breast, can be changed in Ontario every two years because of the Assistance Devices Program.

Bowen wants to be the local collection person for old prostheses.

"Prostheses are very important for women overseas and we're fortunate in Canada the government pays for it. I just want to take the opportunity to help these people where I can," says Bowen, herself a mastectomy patient after being diagnosed with breast cancer in 1979.

Bowen keeps her used prostheses in her closet, knowing it will some day help a needy person.

"I never thought of recycling them before, but that's what we're doing. I know there are a lot of mastectomy patients in Acton and if they keep their used prostheses, it could be passed on," she comments.

"Even if I collect six, that's a half-dozen people who are going to be happy."

While breast cancer is not thought to be hereditary, Bowen scoffs at the notion after seeing her mother, sister and cousin suffer from it.

She says there is something to be said for diet. Bowen points out there aren't as many cancer cases in Asia, where the diet consists of natural food — fish, rice and vegetables.

"I wonder if it's not the preservatives in our food," ponders Bowen, citing other variables such as heredity and radiation exposure.



LYNDA BOWEN

"We in Canada tend to have more fatty foods (i.e. fat red meats) whereas Asians are not as prone to eating junk food."

Bowen says women should be checking themselves and seeing a doctor monthly. If you don't know how, she adds, ask a nurse for help.

She says there could be a blood test in the near future that will show women if they're susceptible to breast cancer.

But it won't be available to females in Third World countries.

"It must be terrible if you don't

have help from medical people. Their first priority is getting fed, meanwhile their body could be deteriorating.

"There must be a stigma in Third World countries about going out and not having a complete body. I know I'd think twice about it."

Anyone who can help in donating used prostheses to Third World nations can reach Lynda Bowen at her home (phone number is 853-0391).



Students Adam Brown, left, and Russell Voutour have returned from the Kaleidoscope leadership program, where they discussed the value of a student council. (Brad Hammond photo)

Teens speak out against drugs and alcohol

BY BRAD HAMMOND

The Acton Tanner

Adam Brown and Russell Voutour, students at Acton High, travelled to Hamilton last Thursday to take part in the four day Kaleidoscope Leadership Program, with some 200 students from across the province.

The conference was hosted by the Ontario Secondary School Students Association (OSSSA) for those interested in the student council program at their schools.

"We had demonstrations from the AIDS network, a convicted drunk driver and Much Music, to help develop personal leadership skills and a better understanding of the world around us," states Brown.

"There were several discussions about the presence of drugs and

alcohol in high schools across the province. It opened our eyes to the fact that drugs and alcohol are being used in all high schools and has become a serious problem."

Brown is hoping to convince students at Acton High that "drugs and alcohol don't mix with education and school functions. We just don't need them to have a good time."

Peer pressure plays a large part in teenage drinking. Brown suggests, "Kids need to realize that they do not need to be drunk just because their friends are. We all have a choice to walk away from tempting or dangerous situations and do what we feel is right."

Brown is hoping that through the efforts of student council, staff and students, alcohol and drug abuse in the school will decline.

Special dates set by council

Council was busy Monday night re-naming days, weeks and even some months in support of several community organizations.

The new "Awareness Calendar" will consist of the following special dates:

- March will be "Red Cross Month." A special flag-raising ceremony will be held March 1, from 10 am to 12 noon at the Civic Centre.

- "International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" will be March 21, to commemorate an incident in South Africa when a peaceful rally against Apartheid ended in tragedy. An Open House, hosted by the North Halton Citizens Cultural Awareness Committee, will be held at 1:30 pm at the Police Station in Georgetown.

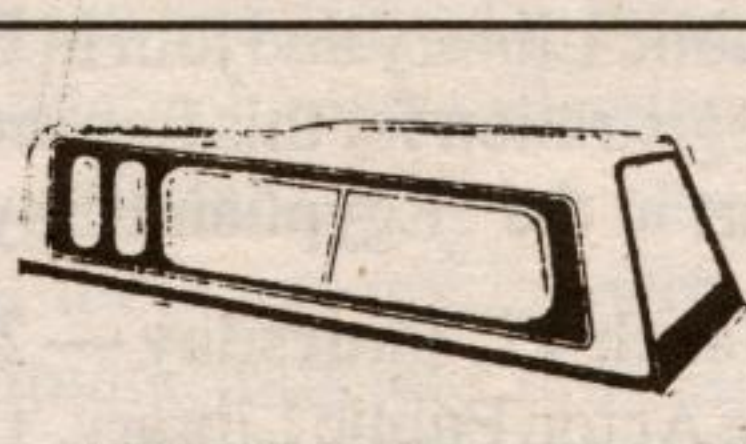
- The Canadian Cancer Society designated April as "Cancer Month." There will be a flag-raising ceremony at the Civic Centre on March 31 at 9 am.

- The week of April 10-16 will now be known as the Canadian Wildlife Federation's "National Wildlife Week."

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